

For Immediate Release:

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June 18, 2012

The Sustainability Institute at Bridgemont and West Virginia Sustainable Communities Program Award Grants Under Pilot Program

Montgomery, WV – The Sustainability Institute at Bridgemont (BSI) and the West Virginia Sustainable Communities (WVSC) program awarded five Technical Assistance Mini-Grants to communities across the state.

Awards were announced last week and projects are to be completed by the end of the year. These grants support community-based efforts to advance sustainability goals for West Virginia communities in areas including:

- Green Building, Renovation, Deconstruction
- Citizen Engagement/Public Participation
- Community Design/Planning
- Economic Development, Entrepreneurship
- Energy Efficiency, Energy Audits, Greenhouse Gas Assessment
- Livability/Walkability/Smart Growth
- Recycling, Composting

“The BSI received a variety of innovative community-based proposals, which represents the increasing awareness about sustainability efforts across West Virginia,” said Kelly Jo Drey, Director of the BSI. “A key factor to our success in promoting these grants was educating people that the true nature of sustainability is balancing economic and environmental needs to promote healthy and vibrant communities.”

The WVSC was launched by the WV Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) in 2006 to send young people from diverse backgrounds to work with rural communities across the state in order to further community-based sustainability efforts. WVDEP’s new television series, *Environment Matters*, recently profiled the Technical Assistance Mini-Grants recipients for the [June 12th episode](#). The magazine-news style show is broadcast on the WV Library Commission network and youtube.com. The WVSC episode along with others featuring environmental issues important to West Virginia can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/wvenvironment>

“I’m proud of the growth we have seen in the WVSC program over the past seven years,” said Gregory Adolfson, Sustainability Officer at WVDEP. “We continue to see new communities request support in the arena of sustainability, which reflects the growing concern of our citizens to support economic prosperity and well being of their communities.”

The 2012 award winners were:

- **Coalfield Development Corporation** (Wayne County) \$4,000
The 21st Century Jobs Initiative trains at-risk young adults for employment in the green construction/deconstruction field.
- **Alderson Community Center for the Arts and Humanities** \$5,000 This grant will help fund an energy efficiency and solar energy engineering study and implementation plan for the ACCAH.
- **Tri-State Local Foods Project** (Huntington area) \$5,000
Technical assistance will support the creation of a “Buy Local” campaign to support the Tri-State Local Foods year-round marketplace.
- **City of Shinnston** \$5,000
WVSC funds will allow the City to engage a LEED certified architect to create a sustainable and energy efficient renovation plan for an historic building.
- **Wood County Energy Efficiency Project** \$5,000
WVSC funds will support the development of a pilot financing program for energy efficiency upgrades for middle-income homeowners.

WVSC is under the direction of the BSI, in partnership with WV Department of Environmental Protection, WV Community Development Hub, and Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation. The mission of the WVSC program is to promote sustainability principles across West Virginia, and support communities in becoming environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable for the benefit of current, and future generations.

Along with supporting community development in West Virginia, the Sustainability Institute at Bridgmont works to develop West Virginia’s workforce through business education and business process improvement and enhances academics by supporting and improving higher education programs.

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